

The invasion of the English in Beek



The Blokhut, Natte Beek2 in Beek. Here, Marie Dazert wrote her diary. Painting by Mary Dazert, daughter of Marie, 17 Sept 1945.

Diary Marie Dazert

written in the period 17 September 1944 - 1945.

When Marie Dazert started writing her diary, the allied forces started Operation Market Garden. This was an offensive against Nazi-Germany. The allied forces wanted to cross the main Dutch rivers in order to cross the border of Germany.

Market Garden consisted of a huge airborne operation (Market) and a ground operation from Belgium(Garden).



American para's land at Groesbeek during Operation Market Garden.



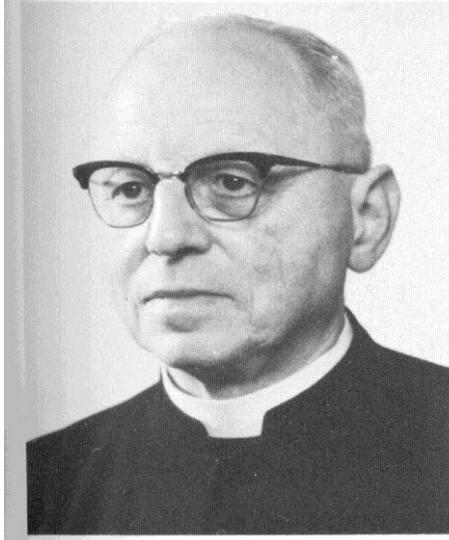
A parachutist who has landed is looking at the droppings near Groesbeek.

The invasion of the English in Beek.

17 September 1944:

On Sunday in the Holy Mass of ten o'clock we heard shooting, bombs

falling, it was scary. The chaplain was just preaching. Suddenly all attention was gone. Some people stood up, but most of them stayed calm. The chaplain paused for a moment and then resolutely ended his sermon. Under constant noise we went to Communion. I thought, if we had to die now, it would be a solemn moment.



Pastor van Loon

We came home and had breakfast but things were getting restless again. We then sat on the Veranda and saw countless airplanes landing in the surroundings of Groesbeek. It was very interesting, but we weren't afraid yet. On Monday, however, things got serious, and the great attack on Nijmegen and Beek began. It was a deafening noise, grenades, cannons, bombs, machine guns, heavy tanks, airplanes, anyway it is impossible to describe. The whole day we took our precautions, divided our goods and our food over the house and the 2 sheds and grabbed our escape

suitcases and ran from the house to the shelter and vice versa. Unfortunately, the second day, water, electricity and gas stopped.



Marie Dazert -Postma

De invasie der Engelschen in Beek.
Zaterdag 17 September 1944 in de Kerk van tien uur
hoorden we schieten. Bommen vallen enz. De kapelaan
stond juist te preeken. Iedereen was alle aandacht weg.
Enige menschen stonden op maar de meeste menschen
bleven toch rustig. De kapelaan hield even op en maakte
haar maar resoluut een einde aan z'n preek. Onder roesot
durend lawaai gingen we te Communie. Ik dacht als
we nu eens dood moesten zou het toch wel een plechtig
oogenblik zijn. Thuis gekomen ontbeten we maar het
werd alweer onrustig. We zijn toen op de Warande
gaan zitten en zagen ontelbare vliegmaschinen landen
in de omgeving van Groesbeek. Het was machtig
interessant maar we waren nog niet bang. Maar de

The first page of the diary.

However we had been cooking ahead on Monday, and we were able to warm it up on the stove at the neighbours. We still slept in our bed on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, although dressed and with shoes on. In the village the situation was very bad. Every moment you heard: this or that house is also on fire. All villagers were in shelters or fled to the Ooy. But there was trouble as well. A division of 300 German SS men, shot over us all the time and from the Kopsche hof they shot back again, so that we got very scared. Wednesday morning we fled with food supply to Verhagen who had a good shelter of reinforced concrete. In the afternoon we had gone back again for a moment, and had to head back into our own shelter in a hurry. (The shelter has done us good service) and we spent scary hours there.



Soldiers on the Rijkstraatweg, dated September 21, 1944.

Behind the old school, were some soldiers and also in the field next to us and we sat with heads bent down, to escape the machine gun bullets that we heard coming down over us all the time. Ernie later found shrapnel also in the neighbourhood. Then we got so scared that we decided to spend the night in the shelter at Verhagen. We brought our armchairs and blankets there. We will never forget this night. We slept with nineteen people in that basement, family Verhagen with 5 persons, Miss. Borremans with 3 children, Leenders also with 5 persons, Mrs. de Ranitz with Meta and the three of us.

It was pitch dark and every few seconds a heavy cannon shot went right over us. We didn't dare to sleep and were glad when the night was over.



Rijkstraatweg 68, the house of fam. Verhagen, where the shelter was in the basement.

Furthermore, all those terrible rumors about Nijmegen and Beek. The fear held you in its grip. Where Germans had to retreat, they threw flaming torches into the houses. Day and night you saw black clouds and a red glow on both sides. The village Beek is heavily ravaged. Practically speaking, only that part around us is still okay, five minutes or so on either side of us. Not everything is burnt out, but it is heavily damaged. The rectory was also burned. The pastor and chaplain have had to crawl out on all fours.



The Roman Catholic church was severely damaged.

The church is heavily damaged. We're going to church at the French Pensionaat now. Then Thursday came and numerous tanks arrived with Americans and Englishmen. We thought, now there will be nothing left of Beek and we asked the Tommie's what we had to do. They told us that we would do better to leave. But where to? Oh yes, Nijmegen was free, there they were all walking with orange ribbons on, so we went there. The five of us walked through the Paddepoel, or in other words Kasteelselaan, carrying all we could, and then arrived at the Ubbergschen Weg. There, Mrs. de Ranitz met Mrs vd Hövell tot Westerfliet, who took us to a coach house with large cellar, where we thought we would be safe. We all got a cup of soup, a dish with mashed potatoes, and a delicious pear.



The Wilhelmina medaillon (fam. Franken-de Vries)



Liberation of Nijmegen. A British column passes the wreck of a German car.

Suddenly there was another call: everyone out! We broke up again and headed to the Hollenweg, where we saw the Boldrik family.

Husband, wife and 5 children. Madam was very nervous. So we went on together and there the daughters of Mr. Asmann stood watching on the Berg en DalschenWeg.

There we all took some rest and drank tea and then the parade went on. I forgot to mention that in the Paddenpoel we spoke to Miss Jansen of the Laundry, who told us to go to her house on the Berg and DalschenWeg. The basement was open. So we went there and found the owner at home. Among all those who were there, the families v Veggel en v Oerle came with two small children of which one had whooping cough and the other croup. The two families consisted of nine people.

Luckily the house where we had arrived was a guest house so beds and chairs in abundance. The guests had to give way to the Germans so that



Machine gun nest along the road near the Ubbergseweg.

the house now was completely empty. There were some beds in the basement, and further on we dragged down armchairs, so that we slept for better or for worse.

21 September:

On Thursday we only made do with bread that we had brought with us. But Friday we peeled a lot of potatoes. Mrs v Veggel had with her a bottle of salad oil and eggs, so we ate baked potatoes with a hard-boiled egg. It tasted nice. We could get bread in Nijmegen, I brought butter and cheese with me and further we were treated to delicious pork, minced meat and bacon, the family Van Veggel had all carried in cans. The noise from the shooting we got as a gift.



Corned beef.

The second night we dragged beds to the cellar, so we could all rest. But then one of the men discovered that there were people walking around the house. They went to see and noticed that signals were given from our house, with a lamp. We still don't know what has happened, but everyone was afraid they would shoot at the house and no one could sleep anymore. Corry and I had taken a sleeping tablet the previous night. We woke up from all the talk, but were a little drowsy, so that we were the only ones who didn't get scared.

23 September:

Then came Saturday. Some men went to see Beek and found out that we could come back. Corry had been with Piet v Veggel to Nijmegen on Friday. The city of Nijmegen no longer exists. The areas outside the actual city do, but many houses are also very battered there.

So we went back to Beek in procession (with a barrow) and found all we owned undamaged. Not a window was broken. Corry had left the house in Maria's care! But we were stunned to also find all our food and all our clothes again, because in the village everything had been stolen.

In the Ooy, the fighting had not finished yet. Many farms have been burned. Little children have been kept alive with chewed red cabbage. The older people ate the outer leaves raw. On Sunday we went to the French Pensionaat to go to church and then we were terrified again because a whole lot of German airplanes flew over us to destroy the bridge. On Monday, I was ill and had a strep throat. I've been afraid all day when those cursed German airplanes flew over us again to bomb the bridge. Of course, then there was a heavy shooting. That's really scary.

On Monday, something had certainly happened again with the electricity, that went back on, when we came home. That's very difficult. At first we cooked at the neighbours again, but now we're making due on a laundry stove that's outside.



The Union of Female Volunteers.

Corry had a headache almost the whole week, but still held up well. Ernie is a member of the Union Female Volunteers, and helps in the village with handing out milk, picking up utensils, scary. The number of deaths is not too bad. 10 villagers, 10 Tommies and 10 Germans. Maybe there'll be a few more. You don't know exactly. I don't know the number of deaths in Nijmegen. Many people have lost everything. You're constantly freaking out here. Saturday night, a tank ran over a landmine. The mayor's house and that of Hanegraaf, all the windows broken(right with us). 4 Tommies injured and Rozenhof badly damaged.



Villa Rozenhof, Rijksstraatweg 43, Ubbergen.

Then suddenly another grenade explodes in the meadow. We have one advantage. We regularly get meat from the cattle that are killed. Now the army is on its way to Kleef. According to reports, Kleef has already fallen. In Germany, it's full of white sheets and cloths, they say. So that the residents will remain unharmed. If it will help?

From Arnhem we hear the worst reports. I'm afraid there's not much left of that either. We haven't been out of our clothes for eight days now.

26 September:

Tuesday we experienced the worst day and night of all. Every few minutes, the German planes came back to shoot at the bridge. And then it was such a noise above your head, that you could hardly stand it. It was like we were in hell. We crawled into the deep closet in the hallway, but that was also rocking. We were afraid all the bottles of food would fall on our heads.

We went back to the hall and we heard women and children screaming. It was pitch dark. We opened the door and shouted, "Come on in." Then Miss Leenders came with a child on her arm, wrapped in a wool blanket, and the 2 others crying behind her, and the Bouwman family (4) all came in behind her. But the hellish noise just kept going on. You heard the shrapnel fall. Suddenly, Miss Leenders ran away with the children, to lie down on the ground outside. Most stupid. It was a real panic.

It started at half past seven and lasted until one o'clock at night.

Then I fell asleep and didn't experience anything. Now they're all going to flee again here, but I feel too ill, so we're not going. Now we are sleeping again with our top clothes and shoes on.

4 October:

Continuation. Since the 26th of September we have been shot on almost day and night. One can understand how hard this is. Sometimes there is a moment of rest and we quickly get our groceries, but mostly you can't shop in peace. Several inhabitants of Beek have fallen victim to shrapnel. They are getting used to the noise. Over time, you get more cold-blooded. We're sleeping on our own beds now. It's more dangerous than in the air raid shelter of Verhagen, but after an attack of dysentery that Corry, Ernie and I have had, we decided to stay home again. The forced stay with strangers in one room makes strong demands on your nerves. I had a strep throat that made me snore. A comment was made about it so I put a handkerchief around my mouth and due to fear of snoring, I finally didn't sleep at all. It made the girls irritated and they didn't want to go to the basement anymore.

Every time we heard the worst messages. Corry was shot at several times on her way, by a German who was emptying his rifle. She hid behind a tree.

Arnhem couldn't be conquered. Elst was occupied again by the Germans. In the Ooy we saw fire all the time. This afternoon, Corry was reading, and I was writing, when a bomb fell near us and a grenade exploded. We immediately crawled under the table. Ernie, who was washing dishes at the Peadologic Institute and fetched the glasses at the Ice-site, said the bomb had fallen 50 meters from her, and the grenade had shattered the windows at the Dijker family. So it was pretty close.



The ice-site of Nijmegen at the Ubbergensdike.

Sometimes you also experience a funny moment. When you go across the street to crawl into the basement and you look around and see them all coming, loaded with piles of blankets and suitcases, Meta with a cat on the arm, Bennie Verhagen with a dog and last but not least the goat of the Vroegop family, pulled on a string. Then another moment in the shelter which Jan has made, we all put a cloth around our head, because of the sand drifts and when it takes a little long biting into a double sandwich. But the tension is a bit long. It has already been 2 1/2 weeks now. Fortunately, the messages are getting more hopeful. Everywhere the Allies win eventually. On September 22 the 1st newspaper was printed again.

5 October:

Hurray! for our freedom. On the Berg and DalschenWeg, where we have recently been, 8 direct hits had come down. And a grenade that did not explode, came through the roof of Mr. Asmann.

This morning V1 bombs were launched from Germany, they claim. The English went to the Siegfried line a couple of days ago taking a large

number of airplanes. Ernie still changes illumination pots from the Ice Rink into drinking glasses. We are very shocked by the bad news we get from Holland. Now I'm worried about Jan, Rie, Bep, Lou and Ineke and about all the other family.

The Germans still reign there and there is also hunger, they say. I wish it would end soon. Ernie has to nurse the ill in Waalheuvel now.



Villa Waalheuvel in Ubbergen, temporary hospital.



Het Hulp Ziekenhuis „Waalheuvel” te Ubbergen bevond zich vrijwel onmiddellijk achter het front. Toch lagen de zieken, als het rustig was in de lucht, bij zonnig weer zoveel mogelijk buiten op de terrassen.

“Waalheuvel” was located almost behind the front. And yet, when the air was quiet, the patients were on the terraces in the sunshine, as much as possible.

8 October:

We have been under constant shooting for 3 weeks now. It's almost too hard to bear. Also, we still sleep with our clothes on. Today Sunday quiet for the first time.

A cannon shot every few hours. Corry took Annie and Jo Hoogland for a walk and saw a graveyard of 30 Tommies (British Soldiers) close to the HeiligLandStichting.



Temporary graveyard at the Nebo in Heilig Landstichting.

9 October:

This morning I went shopping and stood at the grocery store. There, a grenade exploded at the Rusthof hotel. We were half-scared to death. I abandoned, left my groceries, was persecuted by three grenades and flew home. However I didn't see any damage anywhere. Later, I heard that at butcher Peters and a house away, 3 pigs had been killed. All day long, the German people have been busy throwing grenades.

10 October:

Fairly quiet day. It's raining terribly. By the evening, 7 American soldiers came asking if we didn't have a place to sleep for them. We gave them the barn. They're really nice guys and very civilized. At Arnhem they are still fighting. When you read the paper, you get upset. Especially because of the messages from Holland that we hear on the radio.

11 October:

Today an ultimatum has been given to Aachen, to surrender or it will be bombed flat. The residents hoisted the white flag, but the commander refuses. The Americans are using our barn. It's become a kitchen now. Some of them are very nice guys. It is very busy in there. They're boning a calf, baking bacon from cans. We got coal, rice tea, flour, etc. There's a piece of heavy artillery somewhere behind us shaking the whole house beneath us. Yesterday we saw another big fire in the Ooy. Moreover, it's quiet.

This afternoon I came into the garden. It was a fantastic sight. All the Tommies, I couldn't even count them, sitting in the grass against the trees, eating their dinner. And when I looked at the barn, I didn't know what I was seeing.

The cook had used an old mattress cover, that was hanging in the barn to dry, as an apron. It was a beautiful sight.

(They do not eat much, but they eat well, 3 times a day something warm, and all 3 meal with bread and coffee).

In another corner of the garden was the barber's shop.

There they all got haircuts and shaves. By midday, another grenade blast came. Aachen has been burned down. It is and it remains dangerous.



Theaterplatz Aachen, shortly after the first removal of the damage of the bombings.

12 October:

Last night we went to bed at half past nine. It was very busy in the air again. Sometimes it seemed as if the grenades were flying into the house. But we had asked some Tommies if they wanted to warn us when there was danger and then take us into the basement. We were just in our first sleep, when the bell rang at half past ten and they told us it was necessary to go into the basement.

It was another terrible noise. There were a lot of grenades. Over a hundred have fallen into our area. Now we've put our beds in the

basement. We have another privilege, because they know us, we can stay at home longer and they take us across the street. Arm in arm we went to the fire. Otherwise, we'd have to go to the basement at six o'clock. We were really lucky, because there are also Sing-Sing residents among the soldiers. They have bald heads. In the kitchen (the barn) 3 times a day 200 men come to get their food. Last night it was quiet again.

13 October:

This morning they came again to ask if they could write in our living room. That's not so cozy now, because now we're not so free anymore. On the left and right, many residents of Beek are arrested for the reason that there was signaling going on all the time. Mr. Lobbers, Mr v Veggel, Mr. van Haren, Mr. Schneemann have been picked up and, moreover, all women and men of German descent, because there were constant signals.

15 October:

Sunday. This morning, the captain came to ask if he could get a room for himself and two officers to eat. He didn't want to take our rooms, but he confiscated our junk room. Part of the Tommies went to the church, others were hunting for Germans who were behind us in the woods. They probably are just little groups of Germans, who want to be charged because they are hungry. It's like an army camp here with us, all boys running around and sitting on the ground eating.

It would be really nice if we were not so often in fear, and when we knew what had become of ours in Holland. It's been four weeks. We have some friends among the Tommies, Dilly, Tommy, Lyle, Eddy, Don, Virian and Jimmy. These seven can come every now and then. Still all days and nights there is noise in the sky. Last night a patrol had to go into the woods to catch a bunch of Germans. 8 Germans and a Russian were the catch. It just keeps on raining grenades here. Now the inhabitants of Persingen have to leave. Grenades have fallen on the French Pensionaat. The turret off and 100 windows broken. I spend days queued up for milk, meat and vegetables. There's almost nothing left to buy.

Luckily, we get a lot of food from the barn, so we haven't had it that bad. The Tommies teach Corry and Ernie Engelsch and Corry and Ernie teach them Dutch with a dictionary and a paper and pencil. They've installed electric light from the house to the barn. They tell that they might be staying here for a month. We're sleeping at home now. Ernie is now helping out again in the hospital baby room.

17 October:

Little by little we understand that we are in the firing line. Last night there was another bombing and two Americans were hit and killed by grenades in the Waterstraat.



The French Pensionaat in Ubbergen.



Damaged farmhouse in or near Beek.

Today I'm at kokkie (the cook in the barn) looking at the electric light in the kitchen. And right off to the cave where he sleeps at night. It wasn't so bad. I believe if you have good blankets is bearable. All the boys try to find someone who teaches them Dutch. With a dictionary and with what

we know already, we are getting along quite a bit. The news from Holland remains bad, but the Americans and English are progressing well especially in Germany. They seem to wait here until Holland is no longer occupied. We get our seven friends to visit us. We asked what they were doing in civilian life. Billy is studying to become a doctor, Tommy had just finished college, Lyle is an architect, Eddy makes roofs and gutters, Don is a farmer, Virian is a telegraph operator and Jimmy is a funeral director. The captain is a PE teacher, and the lieutenant is a lawyer. They're more democratic than we are. They are all getting along. There is some separation, but it's not like here, with us. It's fairly quiet, but this afternoon I heard German grenades again. The Schneemann family is back.

18 October:

Again, a very restless night. The grenades hit in the mountain behind us. Last night we escaped great danger. Frans Hoogland found an undetonated German hand grenade at the pole where we knock our rug. So if it had exploded, Ernie would surely have lost her room. Ernie is nursing a six-year-old boy, who's been hit in his lower back and is most likely going to die. His intestines are also affected, and normal functions are no longer working. Everything comes from the wound. It's like a crater, Ernie says. He's in terrible pain and is crying all the time. The Americans are very complimentary. Corry gets a lot of compliments. The men call her a fine girl, a pretty girl, a darling, a princess. And the captain says when he comes by in the morning: beauty. They're such flatterers. In a very soft voice, a tall lieutenant says: May I come this evening! But you have to keep an eye on them. I think they're used to making passes everywhere. We need to show that the Dutch girls are not flirts. But only friendly and they don't seem to understand that very well. We must be careful to keep our good name.

20 October:

Had a quiet night and slept well. This morning another German flying machine flew over us, and again shrapnel flew left and right. The airplane got hit and someone told us that the pilot just had time to send out where the troops are lying. Now we'll probably get grenades again. Besides, there are still spies here. This week a beggar woman came here, who used to come by, but who hadn't been here in a year and a half. We asked her what she was doing here. She wanted coffee and bread. We had not had any electricity for five days, so we said: we only have cold coffee. She wanted it anyway. Meanwhile we talked to her and asked if everything in Nijmegen was still okay with her. She said her house and everything was gone. Then we asked if her husband and four children were okay. She said yes, they are

all in Eindhoven. That was a little bit strange. And we told the captain. The captain left this morning. The barber is leaving too. He goes to France in 8 days and in a month he can go back to America and has to fight no longer. He's going to get a job at the government. He was very happy. Yesterday in Beek another 3 people were killed, 4 people wounded by grenades. The lieutenant is now gone too. Corry took over Ernie's job for a week.

Riny Romebeek 3-9-22
 Rijk - Jos, Broon 14-01-1930 } U
 Ria Jansen 10-10-1920 } U
 Camilla v. Koest 16-12-1919 help is word.
 Mrs Boons 25-2-1926
 Eon Doois 8-0-1925
 Riny + Corrie Dazert 11-5-1922
 Amy Shegland 5-9-1916
 Bep 29-9-1912
 Denny v. Hasselt 10-3-23. U.V.V.
 Jellie Steenmans 25-9-28.
 Juel Eelderhof 3-5-1922
 Thee Drons 17-3-1921.
 Mrs v. Deuning 15-0-1916
 Foss Scholtens -

On the backside of a photo in Margot van Boldrik's archive, I found the names of Marie Dazert's daughters Corry and Ernie. The persons named, were staff members of emergency hospital Waalheuvel in Ubbergen.

24 October:

We had a day of prayer for the people in Holland on Sunday. The situation has remained the same for several days. German grenades are still falling and every time my heart is beating very fast when you hear

the defense cannon for the first time, and since this goes on day and night intermittently, I often have palpitations, but it is not as intense as it was in the beginning. Yesterday, a soldier was given the honor cross or knight's cross. He had gone through the German line or fire alone, had gone out of a fox hole, so the burrows in which the soldiers sleep are called, got two soldiers and has taken them back. There is fierce fighting in Den Bosch. It is said that the Americans are over the bridge near Arnhem now, that they are on their way to Tilburg and that the Germans are looting a lot in Breda.

30 October:

Yesterday there were again direct hits in Nijmegen on the Javaplein. 3 houses destroyed and also on the American emergency hospital (one hundred deaths).

This morning I heard that some direct hits had come down in Beek and a lot of destruction had been done. Fortunately, the newspaper said that 's Hertogenbosch, Breda, Tilburg en Bergen op Zoom have been liberated. If only our Rie is not harmed. I could message her by means of the Red Cross, but my daughters think it's still too dangerous to go to Nijmegen. Last night and this night, German and English guns went wild again. On Saturday evening, the girls had a dance evening in Ubbergen, in the youth hostel, organized by the English and the Women's Volunteer Union, of which Ernie is a member.

Corry didn't go. She wasn't well enough. Ernie had a lot of fun. They also sang national songs and did folk dances.



Youth hostel "Overberg" in Ubbergen.

31 October:

Tonight I was terribly afraid.

Such strange bombs fell again. At first, it's as if you hear a chair shift a few times. Then a ten count dead silence and then the bomb bursts and a noise starts. This morning I went to the village and the damage there had become worse. Whoever still had a window had lost them now. The houses on the Van Randwijkweg are completely uninhabitable and the church is no longer usable. It was a sad sight. I've now sent a Red Cross letter to Rie. Mr. Lips was so kind to take it with him for me. There are strict orders.

Even the American boys who are off duty, are no longer allowed to be out in the street after six o'clock, so no one's coming. Moreover, we sit in the dark for about two hours in the evening. It's not very cosy, but since no one seemed to cut back on electricity, it is now done by the government.



The interior of the St. Bartholomeus church in Beek.

With the latest bombing event, seven people were killed in Beek. This afternoon I went to Nijmegen on the Berg en Dalschenweg. Along the way, a lot of airplanes flew over again and I had to go into a basement, since there was another dogfight. When I got home, Corry told me that Frans Hoogland and some Americans had prayed different rosaries in the church, because they were so afraid, since so many grenades fell here. Four people were killed again.

4 November

It's so bad now with airplanes and grenade strikes, that all the villagers who still live in the village and still live in a damaged house or in the

remains of their house, now gave up on it and have moved on. The grocery store is now housed in the distribution office and the butcher's shop in the warehouse of Vroegop. Now I don't have to go to the dangerous village anymore. I can get all the groceries nearby right now. Luckily, we got our radio back. One of the Tommies checked it and fixed it.

That's good. Mr. Chaplain will most likely go to Tilburg by car. I gave him a letter for our Rie. Now I hope he will go. A lot of dogfights again today. We're in a very dangerous place here. Corry and Ernie have another dance evening today.



Evacuation near Nijmegen.

Sunday 5 November:

Sunday morning, Hammie Hendriks came to tell us that we had to leave Beek. It was a very crazy sensation. We were just going to church and didn't pay much attention when praying. Until Tuesday morning, we had time to pack. We went to work full speed. Everything had to be put in one room and the key and the house key had to be taken to the town hall. We put everything in the living room and by five o'clock, when we were exhausted and taking a break, (Monday) we heard a bang and Ernie said: behind the apple tree at Leenders is a big flame. The nearby soldiers flew there with the revolver in hand and we flew after them. Oh God, what we

saw then was terrible. Little Bennie Verhagen, carried by a soldier, was hanging limp on his arm. His little face and neck were burned black and bled and were almost completely gone. Hans Verhagen and a little boy Verweij were badly injured. The poor mother, who was sick, came running into the street and could just see the boys getting into a car. We brought her into our house. She was desperate because her husband had also just been taken away. I felt terrible for her. The soldiers came back and told that little Bennie was already dead and that one of the other boys was blind.



Little Bennie Verhagen died.

Fortunately, Mr. Verhagen was allowed to go back home. By further information, it turned out that they could not say anything about the other boys yet. Of course, they had been playing again with a hand grenade, that they had taken from the soldiers. We were all deeply impressed and since the electric light was out again and we could not go on working, we went to bed at about nine o'clock. The next day at six o'clock we got up, to prepare everything and just when we were almost ready and our sandwiches had been packed, they came to tell us, that the

dividing line was at our house and we were allowed to stay. Ernie was overjoyed, but we weren't because we were dead tired and wished we would rather have gone now. Life in a camp may not be easy, but now the sword is still hanging over our heads. And everywhere you have put stuff in and we have put furniture in front of all cabinets so it is very difficult. For now we're only going to make do for a few days and if it's still like this on Sunday, we will furnish one room again and go on sleep in the packed room.

Furthermore, the whole village and Berg en Dal left. Ubbergen is still intact. It will depend on the signaling whether we can stay. In the evening there was still a signal. 3 Americans have been killed or missing while going on patrol in Germany. Last night, another group of Germans was patrolling Beek and three Americans were killed.

8 November:

Now all the people of Beek up to our house, have left. It is claimed that the English are coming now, who want to have the houses to live in. On all the houses there are placards Off limits Out of bounds. It's a dead

sight.

And frankly, I'm terrified that a tough battle is about to begin and then we will be in the middle of it. I'd rather have been gone by now. Although I have heard from several sides, that it is not easy in camps and with other people.

The surplus food is taken from the kitchen by the people from the neighborhood, but now after the death of Bennie Verhagen, no one is allowed on the premises anymore. They all felt just as bad that they were no longer getting food. Although not so violent, we're still being shot upon day and night. This morning I went to Bennie Verhagen's funeral. The parents were sad but calm. This afternoon Nijmegen was shot at very badly again. Again about 100 deaths. It doesn't stop. Yesterday, very unexpectedly, all our Tommies left. We got a lot of food from them. Now the Canadians go into the homes of the people who have left. Our area is now deserted, because we are no longer allowed into the village and our terrain is abandoned. It's very uncanny now, because we only have one neat room, since we don't know yet if we can stay forever; it's crazy to make everything tidy again. On the road it is still a busy traffic of cars going and coming.

15 November:

This afternoon Corry and I went to Nijmegen to try to buy something for Ernie's birthday. We managed to get something. It's a little too strong to say that the whole city center is gone. Here and there are still a few houses, but it was a desolate sight. We had a quiet afternoon without shells. But the **16th** was very bad again and grenades fell everywhere. Several ladies, including Meta and Ernie, get the vegetables out of the gardens, but it's a dangerous job. They had to hide several times. We don't see anyone anymore except the border guard standing near Peeman's cottage.

We give them a cup of coffee every now and then. So far there are already over 500 deaths in Nijmegen, and 300 Americans and English. In Beek 50 deaths and some thirty Tommies and Germans. Corry likes it well in the hospital. We heard the border guard tell, that houses in the village that were still undamaged have been destroyed.



Damaged stained glass in the Bartholomeus.

Another bomb had fallen on the church again. A new offensive has begun, it is said. Here and there, small groups of Germans are still being caught, even in the city. So far, nothing heard from Rie. When we came to the city, we saw that the house of Jaap Jongedijk and Thea Ashof had been destroyed. We didn't have time anymore, as we should be in by six o'clock, but next time we will ask what happened to them. We

now have to get our groceries in Ubbergen again. Our retailers are in the most impossible places. The butcher is in the Cottage, the house next to the youth hostel, the grocer is in the coach house of Baroness vd Hövell tot Westerflieper and the milk we have to get in pub de Tol. If we could get it inside, it wouldn't be so bad, but even when it rains like cats and dogs, we have to stand outside in the rain.

20 November:

Tonight we had terrible grenade hits again. Almost all fell in Nijmegen. Poor people in Nijmegen. Tonight on the Berg and Dalscheweg 40 deaths. The Stephanus church also hit. A tower and the entrance broken. The Gelderlander is also hit. Now, for the moment, we don't get a newspaper. Corry and Ernie are both ill. Ernie has to throw up and Corry has dysentery. Verhagen's eldest son is doing better, but his eye is not okay yet. The 3rd little boy who got injured in the accident, is already getting well. We're all getting a little depressed and nervous. We also have a lot of problems dogs that have lost their homes. They're all roaming around our place. Yesterday evening when we were already in the bed, there was a knock on the door. In the end we understood that there was a dog banging on the door. Cosy. We had a letter from Tonny Rosien. She is in a camp near Eindhoven with her father. Since they had gone with the Red cross car and her mother and sister with the usual transport, they lost each other.

25 November:

Now and then we see the new German weapon. A white-grey stripe going in the air and then you see a red fireball quite high. You are very afraid of where that thing is going. Sometimes you also see a projectile that goes through the air and that looks like a kind of iron stove. Our border guard is now dressed like the Englishmen. We're are cut off from electricity for 3 or four hours every day.



The moon was shining brightly.

This week it was from 4 to 8 o'clock. We were looking outside, the moon was shining very brightly and then we saw coloured lights appear in the windows of the laundry. Every moment a different shape and a different colour.

We called the land guard, and he thought it was crazy too. After a few days, he told me that it was the reflection of the flares. Well, we 'll just believe it. This week a guard was hit by a grenade which cut off both his legs.

Sunday morning, we escaped a great danger. We were in the church, when we heard a dogfight, it was nasty. Pieces of glass fell near Corry, when two bombs fell. Several people flew out of the church. When we came out of the church (the French Pensionaat) it turned out, a bomb had fallen on the plateau next to Dijker (in the woods.) Because of the air pressure, windows were broken everywhere again. The door of the coach house (below Vroegop) was pushed all the way in, the roof completely broken. Vroegop can't live there anymore. At Hoogland, Boldrik, Leenders several windows broke. We thought how bad will it be at our house? One window was open and the stool lay broken outside and the large mirror above Ernie's bed lay on the ground broken into a thousand pieces.

So we were lucky. One bomb landed on the Kwakkenberg on Jurgens' house. Two children killed and twenty Canadians dead and wounded. We're starting to get bored to live in such a mess, and we're in the process of putting everything back in place again. We got another letter from the Rosiertjes, that the whole family was back together.



The little sisters Chrisje and Lisetje Jurgens died by the bombing in their house on the Kwakkenbergweg.

2 December:

From Saturday Dec 2 to Tuesday we have been in lots of shells. In Nijmegen they have come down in mass again. There are very many deaths. At the Canissius college on the Berg en Dalscheweg, 3 bombs ended up in the basement.



People were hiding in the basement of the Canissius College.

Mrs. de Ranitz spoke to M.D.Roessingh today. He had spoken to a colleague from Nijmegen, M.D.Noorduijn. "You look upset chap" M.D. Roessingh says. "Haven't you heard then?" M.D. Noorduijn says, "that the basement of the Canisius College where we sleep at night has been hit?" Do you think it's any fun when you have to sweep your best friend's pieces and chunks together? "Isn't it tragic to hear things like that? Besides, the Germans have busted the Rhine dike, so that the Betuwe fills up with water. Where we are, the fields are already under water. Jaap Jongedijk and his wife were rescued. They both work in the office at the Anna Foundation and live in a boarding house on Annastraat. They have lost everything.

13 December:

Besides the usual anti-aircraft guns, that we almost don't hear anymore, it has been quiet here for several days. The water is now so high in the Ooy, that it has reached the gardens across the street. The village of

High water in the Ooy, reaching the backyards on the Rijkstraatweg in Beek.



Persingen is situated in between as a small island. You see nothing but water.

From the 12th to the 13th of December, there was a noise here at night, so we were in our bed shivering with fear in our beds. We couldn't understand what it was. We finally thought about tank guns. I went to the front door to see if I could see anything. And saw flashing lights on the German side. It took a few hours, so we did not get any sleep. The next day we heard that a dozen German tanks had been trying to penetrate. So they were barking at each other, but the attack luckily

was a failure. Now there has been another attack on Belgium. Let's hope it will fail again. The whole week it has rained grenades on poor Nijmegen. One of the border guards who keeps watch here every day, has lost his wife and eight children. Another guard lost his parents and a third guard's parents in law are missing. Last night, a lot of grenades fell in Ubbergen. Now I have sent a total of 10 letters to Rie and still have not heard anything back. I wonder how Jan, Bep, Lou, Ineke and the rest of the family are doing.



Lou and Bep. Bep was Marie's third daughter.

The worst rumors are circulating. We have now also been introduced to about three Englishmen, the girls met at the dance night. The border guards picked up all the cattle left in the Betuwe this week. They had to dredge through the water up to their thighs. Some guys got sick afterwards.

Finally I received a letter from Rie through an Englishman. She had already written a hundred thousand letters, she wrote. We have now met an Englishman and a Canadian. And Ernie now and then talks to a Scotsman at the dance nights. Our land and ethnology surely has been enriched. Some days we don't have electricity for 8 hours now. The night before Christmas, the English started an attack on Germany at our border. We could hear it very well.

25 December:

Christmas, the celebration of peace. What we have been hoping for a long time, the long expected peace, has not come. Both Christmas days the cannon didn't keep silent. Yet no particular things happened fortunately. We only hear the V 2's occasionally pass. Poor people who are affected.

The girls had arranged a nice evening for the Tommies.



Corry Dazert

Corry participated in a clog dance, and Ernie did an English play about the 3 Kings. It was a parody mixed with seriousness. Ernie was the black king. A few weeks back, an old gentleman who lived in the Sisterhouse where Miss v Doorn also lives, was shot dead. The old gentleman, who did not go with the transport, wanted to get some winter clothes from the asylum. The guard here, did not let him through because he had no permit. Then he crossed the wooden bridge on the Ubbergscheweg and wanted to go over the Verbindingsweg.

The Canadians shot him there.

I suspect he's deaf and hasn't listened to them shouting Stop!

28 December:

Slowly, life here is becoming so sad and gloomy that you don't know what to do about it. The young people are not so afraid and now it was freezing they dared to skate on the flooded fields in the Ooy, across the street. I have to say the opportunity was never better since the whole Ooypolder was a nice field.

At about five o'clock Ernie came home, very upset. At about 2 meters from her, a grenade had fallen on the ice. She thought her ear had come off, she said. All people fell on the ice and when they got up they saw a badly injured boy lying there, and later it turned out that Jacques Vroegop, the son of our gardener, was torn in pieces.

This morning I went to offer my condolences. It was a sad situation. They weren't allowed to see him anymore. A young man from Ubbergen, who had seen Ernie lying there, was also so badly injured that he died that evening. Corry came home from the hospital with the message that a grenade had fallen on the Beekmansdaalscheweg, that had killed two children and wounded two. They were taken to the hospital.

New Year's Eve. The girls have gone to a party. Many grenades are falling and V2's are fired. What a misery. We have a lot of distractions due to visitors, because several Canadians and English people are visiting us again. Erwin, Bab, Beverley, Jimmy. Ernie calls one of them Twinkle Eyes. When he heard it, he had to laugh terribly. His mate was there and of course he told it to the others. At the party in the evening, he said to Ernie, "I'll never forgive you for saying something like that, because now I'll never get rid of that name again." We're experiencing the craziest things, I can't possibly write them all down, but I'll tell them later. I've forgotten Reg, who has become one of our most loyal visitors, because he has been here for almost 4 months now.

He is a dear, he's got a wife and two children.

Because of this, life is still bearable. I think I would lose strength otherwise. Yesterday we heard again that in the Tooropstraat 4 people had been killed. Everywhere you saw pieces of people lying. Again someone from Ubbergen was among them.

1 January:

Today the first day of the year. Until now, Our good Lord has miraculously protected us, because we have been in mortal danger for more than three months now. But we get the strength to carry on and are even fairly calm and cold-blooded. This morning to start with, a German airplane crashed on one side of the Ooy and a bomb hit the other side. No accidents. But a little later, Corry came home and told me that the son of Peters, the florist at the border, who had lost his eye as a soldier at the beginning of the war, had now been run over by a car. He had just married and had one child. Poor wretches. Hans Verhagen, whose

brother was killed with a single grenade, still can't use his eye. I'm afraid it's not going to get better. It looks terrible. We don't have electricity for eight hours every day. It's difficult, because we have to cook while it is on, and being in the dark for three hours in the evening is just no fun. But perhaps we are even better off than the people in the occupied territories. We'll hear that later. We have now been given a graveyard at the boarding school, the children's former playground. During one week, three young men were buried there.



Here was the temporary graveyard, near the Franse Pensionaat.

It is snowing heavily here. It's a beautiful sight, but we don't have any coal left. Now we're burning wood and we can sit by the stove. But at least now we don't have that much trouble with grenades, we think because there's snow. But this turns out not to be true either.

In the middle of January there was a new attack Northeast of Nijmegen and we have plenty of grenades again.

Also, the guns are going wild again.

19 January:

I had been to the city and was walking on the crossroad, when I suddenly heard a loud noise and a grenade exploded about 15 meters from me. I hadn't experienced it that close before, so I was very shocked.

I heard groaning and shouting 4 times, "Oh, father, oh, mother." As it started getting dark, I asked the neighbours if they could go and have a look and I kept going. On the way I lay down on the ground for about 7 times, but I came home safe and sound. The grenades all fell close by, probably in honor of princess Margriet's birthday. The cold and the snow are still persisting. We have been given a tree by the municipality to burn. After enquiring if there were any injuries when I saw the grenade fall, a father and daughter both seemed to be injured.



Gathering wood in times of scarcity;

there was there neither gas nor coal.

25 January:

Today a quartermaster came to ask if we wanted to give up the barn and if we had a room for a Captain. We gave him the big room with the hallway of the little room. So we are not bothered by it at all. The Captain is 35 years old, his name is Captain Gillespie and he is very nice. He's treated us to tea and chocolate bars and rum.



Margot van Boldrik kept her "souvenirs" from the war.

We've now met another 5 Canadians.

Tommy, Smeddy, Bert, Henri and Sis. Two of them are great singers and one plays the piano very well. When he's gone, we have to wipe the whole piano with a damp cloth, otherwise we only have black keys. At the Pensionaat, at the Catholic Sisters, they got only 700 Canadians. They're nice guys, the Canadians, however they have one big fault.

They drink a little too much; not all of them fortunately. We try go get rid of those who drink too much, because then they're terribly sentimental.



The Elysian snowfields with the characteristic white farm. This was the view Mary Dazert saw, when she stood in her garden.

A lot of skiing and sledding is going on. The girls have a good life at the moment and we learn to speak English well. We would already be able to manage in England with the language. Regularly V1's are flying over. The battle is now beginning to focus. We can already see it coming that the Germans have to surrender. I think they're having a really hard time right now, and although according to many people they have deserved it, I feel sorry for them at the moment.

The Canadians are preparing for a great attack.

We are once again in the midst of the reality of the first days of war.

Tanks and cars are constantly driving back and forth day and night. You constantly hear V1 and V2 and also a lot of airplanes. And constant

reports of people in the city hit by grenades. In addition, the Germans have broken the dike of Emmerik. Now the Ooy, that had already gone down, is again full of water. It's halfway to Boldrik's garden. The water has now risen to the houses. The captain is on a 10-days leave to England. In his place, we now have a sergeant quartermaster, a nice fat guy and Gordon, the Capitan's assistant.



Two allied DUKW amphibian vehicles, so called "Ducks," on the Rijkstraatweg in Ubbergen, flooded by high water.



The Ooijpolder. The environment of Nijmegen was inundated by the Germans. February 1945.

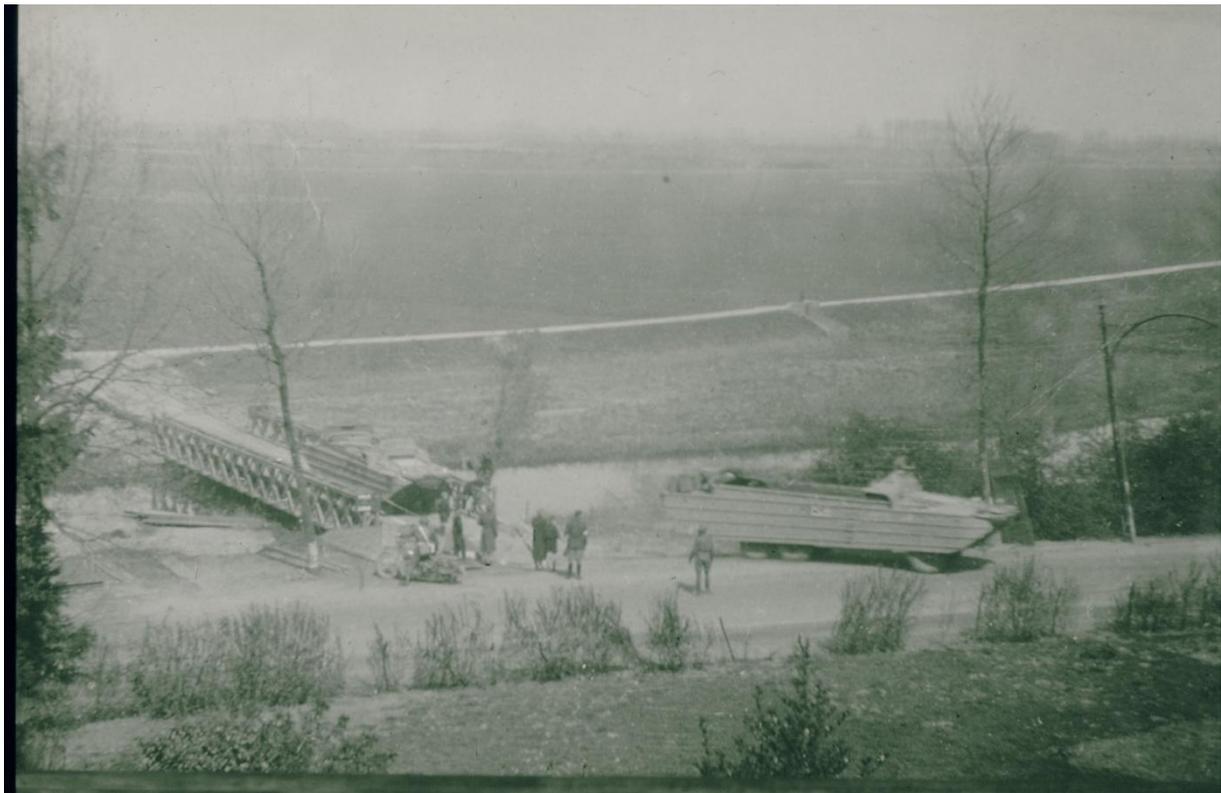


Churchill tanks of the 107th regiment, 34th tankbrigade, at the beginning of the battle for the Reichswald, February 9 1945.

7 February:

This morning at five o'clock the major attack on Germany started. From five o'clock we couldn't sleep anymore. Last night, 6 February, I suddenly became unwell. I don't know what was wrong with me. This morning we ate early at half past eleven, while otherwise we eat at noon. I went to bed for a while, right after dinner and Ernie went to the front room to sit in the armchair. She didn't feel very well either. Suddenly she comes to me and asks Mother: Gerrie Theunissen wants to know which butter voucher there is. So she had got up from her chair and went into the hallway. The little boy had just left and Ernie grabbed something out of the hallway closet. Then we both heard a strange sound, breaking glass, and something fell off the wall. We flew to the front room and there the quartermaster was lying in a pool of blood. The assistant Gordon had a minor arm wound. A whole piece of the roof gone. The stained glass in

Jan's little room broken. The room that the captain had, a window broken and a piece of the ceiling. A piece through the couch, a hole in the door of the closet. A piece from the radio. And in the front room where Ernie sat, there was a hole in the door, in the ceiling, in the wall and the chair she had been sitting in was strewn with wooden splinters of which there were also some in the wall. The tea table had been completely destroyed. Anyway, we had escaped it nicely. Corry had been at the hospital chapel that day, just to pray for us. A sergeant lay dead on the road. The quartermaster has been taken to the hospital.



Two Duck-W's are crossing the "Columbia" Bailey-bridge across the Meertje.

The noise that we heard, was unbelievably loud. Yesterday wide tank boats drove past our garden that just took part of our fence. They are now gathered high in the woods and have opened fire on German land. The whole road is full of cars. The shooting has already been going on for 24 hours. The tank boats go in the water. Now and then a German airplane that flies over us, gets heavily shot at. Yesterday evening very late, a couple of English people came to ask for shelter. We gave them the little barn. About ten slept in the kitchen of Mrs. De Ranitz. Yesterday we got word that the quartermaster was dead. Poor Dikkie, he had never seen his 3 1/2-year-old son.

A lot of driving all day today, but luckily the guns are quieter.

The town of Kleef has fallen. There's much going on here. It looks like the Kalverstraat of Amsterdam, tank boats are constantly standing here, there is big sign on chocolate kiosk, Wainwright National Park. That's the

hill next to us. We're doing a big deal here. There's a traffic cop at the corner of our house. The tank boats made our garden a little smaller and also took 2 steps from the stone pavement.



Stranded troops of the fist Canadian army of General Henry D.G. Cherar are saved by "Buffalo's" in the inundated polder near Leuth. February 8 1945 the Querdam and Erlecomse dam were blown up.

Last week they had taken people from Kleef in the tank boats to be imprisoned here, because they had shot at the soldiers. A red cross soldier (Bert) who came to visit us, told us that children aged 12 years had shot at them in Germany. A German pig is living in our shelter in the garden at the moment. Yes everything is now taken from Germany. You also see them regularly with chickens under their arms. 7 Red Cross soldiers were wounded. It is against all the laws of war. In Mrs. De Ranitz's deep closet, a pin from a grenade has been found. It is a one hundred pounder of Canadian origin. It's an accident, of course, that a grenade explodes on its own, but sometimes it happens. The pig disappeared from the garden again. Too bad, we would have liked it. Secretly, we hoped that they would go away unexpectedly at night and forget about the pig

20 February:

Today the captain came back. He had a pleasant vacation but was now homesick. He had just returned when he was told that he would have to leave the next day. They all hated it. Now our Canadians are gone again

and the house is empty. They were really good company.

22 February

Yesterday at a quarter to one, we had a terrible fright again. Oh, those poor nerves of ours. We heard a terrible bump. Later we heard that behind the Reformschool, German ammunition had exploded for some reason. Vera van Hasselt, the doctor's daughter takes care of cutting the sandwiches and distributing the food to the German prisoners.

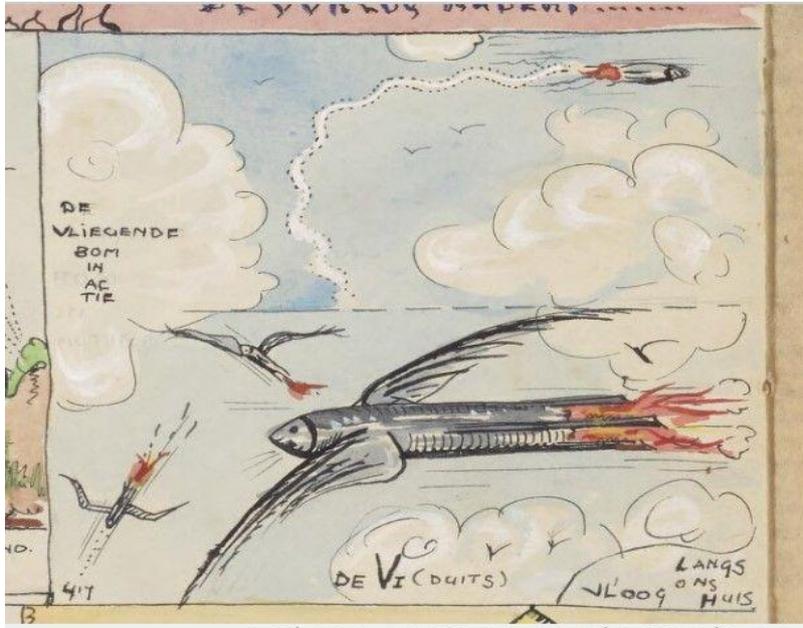


drawn self portrait of Vera van Hasselt.

She was just standing in the kitchen of the Reformschool, when the whole ceiling came down. She had light scratches and crawled under the table. The sandwiches were put outside afterwards, because they were also full of lime and sand. When they looked a little later, they were gone. The prisoners had eaten them all. Miraculously, we have not heard of any

deaths.

There were people slightly injured, and all windows were broken in the surrounding area. It can hardly be called life. I don't even know how we can keep up the courage. We still hear V1's and constantly planes. Of all the soldiers we know, who have gone to Germany, we hear nothing anymore.

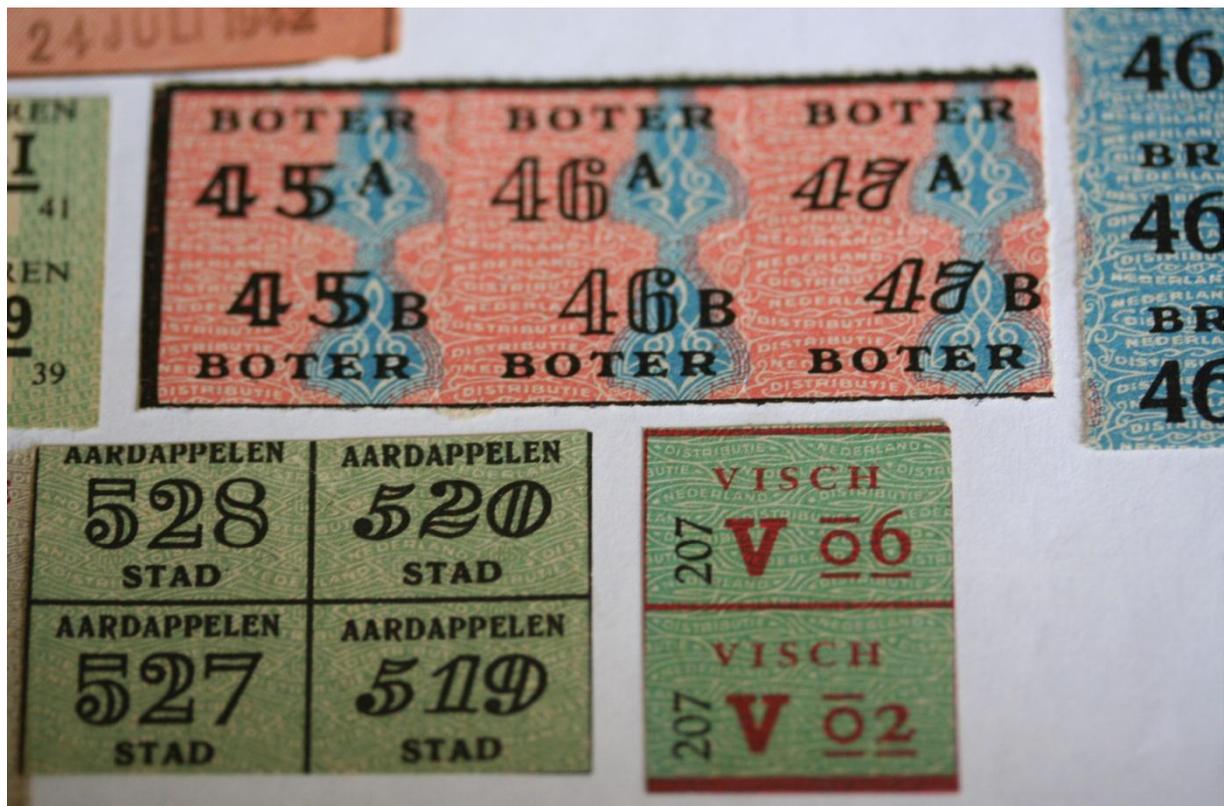


A drawing of the V1, made by Lies Houting when she was about 18 years old. She made a book with drawings during the period 1939 – 1952. The book was donated to the NIOD.

Luckily, I got another message from Rie. She has been very overworked and the doctor doesn't allow her to study now. Pity for her. The captain and Murphy, the new quartermaster have visited us again. They were in Kleef; There was so much food, they told us. The basements were full. It's much quieter here when it comes to shooting, but those awful V1 or V2 just keep flying over. Behind the Reformschool there has been another explosion; 2 days after the first and on a Saturday, at least sixty people were killed by grenades in Nijmegen. 3 children from one household and also many Englishmen and Canadians. But in Germany, things are going fast now. Venlo and Roermond are now also liberated, luckily. The whole day, tanks and cars are on the road to Germany and back.

Also a lot of Red Cross cars and cars with prisoners of war.

At the beginning of March, a V1 fell in Ubbergen. Several houses are badly damaged by the air pressure. Fortunately, no personal accidents have occurred. Only one lady broke her ribs because she got a wardrobe on her back.



Receipts for food.

12 March:

Now we have a Belgian captain (Janssens) billeted, a very nice man. We're really upset about the messages from Holland again. There must be such a famine that hundreds of people die every day. I just hope it's a little exaggerated. A few days before Easter, we had an unexpected joy. Rie came to visit us by Red Cross car! It was a great thing, and we were all very happy. On the 2nd Easter day she had her birthday and we gave a dancing in honor of her birthday. We had decorated the barn with flags and flowers. It was very cozy.

At Rie's birthday, a major offensive began on Arnhem and its surroundings. It is progressing fast now. The Germans run away from Holland and we hope that now it is only a matter of days before Holland will be liberated. But it's not easy. Arnhem was only liberated in mid-April. Now at the moment they're fighting in Amersfoort. I wish we could get news from our family. The uncertainty becomes difficult to bear. The misery in Holland seems to be very bad. Buck, the sergeant who came to bring Rie in a Red Cross car, has visited us a couple of times.



Red Cross car

9 April:

The Belgian captain also left again. He's coming to see us every now and then with his driver Charles Vernest.

We have another new Canadian friend Arthur Garland, a sympathetic boy. The villagers have now returned after a departure of 5 months. They found destroyed houses without furniture, (which had been stolen) and a giant mess, so that many were closer to crying than laughing. It is really bad if you can't find a piece left of it. Every day, countless cars pass by with captured German soldiers. We also got a message from our Canadian friend Bert, the Red Cross soldier. He wrote to us that he was in Belgium with an injured foot.

An American has been here in Beek, and told us that 2 or 3 of our first American friends were dead, but he didn't know who. Arthur comes to visit us every day, he has got a crush on Corry. We had another party, and then Arthur brought six comrades. Pat, Ted, Tom, Ken, Louis and Cicyl who turned out to have a crush on Ernie. However, it turned out to be a married man so Ernie quickly brushed him off. Food packages have been dropped in Holland. Mussolini is dead, and it is said: Hitler is dying. Himmler has made capitulation attempts. Will the long-awaited peace come now? Let's hope it may happen soon, before all of our people have died of hunger.



A picture of the liberation, as was seen in every city of Holland.

5 May:

Capitulation of Holland, Norway and Denmark and food parcels are dropped in Holland. What luck! It does not seem real yet. I'm happy, but I don't have news out of Holland yet. On the 3rd of May our loyal friends Reg and Henry left for Germany.

11 May:

Today the Belgian captain came with a letter from Aunt Jos, and Bep. Bep wrote that they all are fine and that about 25 July they were expecting another baby. O Dear Lord, I am grateful to You. You kept the whole family safe. In Aerdenhout and Bussum they have become very skinny from starvation, Bep wrote. It also said in the letter that Jan had been captured twice by the Germans but that he had escaped by jumping out of the train.



Marie Dazert's youngest daughter Ernie, in the garden of the Blokhut.

Rie came home a few days later and brought six youngsters who came from Stuttgart and now went back to the homeland. There was also a Dutch boy who was married to a Française. We have put them partly in the house, partly in the garage. They can't go any further, so we'll keep them for a few days. It is very difficult with food, and also a bit busy for us, but we will eat of the soup-kitchen for a while.

Last week Henk Bus suddenly stood in front of us and today Tonny vd Heijden: You could see that they had been hungry in Holland. The young ones Marius and Marie Louise, Joop, Dick, Lou and Harry stayed for 8 days and then moved on, except Harry who stayed for 8 more days. Now I can safely put an end to this writing. It is still a hopeless chaos in the world. We often become desperate from the many difficulties in the field of clothing and food. Lou, husband of Bep, came here with Rie Kamphuijs by bike. Bep came to stay with both her children (she had a son in July). They're both cute. Jan is also back home.



Granddaughter Wilhelmina (Ineke) three years old, with her aunt Jos, Marie Dazert's sister.

After everything has calmed down, the nervousness comes out a little bit. But compared to other people, we have been very lucky. All preserved, thank God. However, we will never forget this hard time, and deep in our hearts there is a terrible fear of wars. Let us hope and pray that Our Dear Lord will save us from more wars and suffering. This is our prayer rising to God's throne.

In Nijmegen, 2200 were counted dead. 13.000 were wounded. Lots of houses were severely damaged and glass damage to all houses . 2160 houses were destroyed, 60 streets are completely gone.



Marie Dazert with her four daughters in the garden, at the end of the war.
From left to right: Corry, Marie, Bertha, Ernie and Mary.

End of the diary.

Further information on Marie Dazert and her five children.

Wilhelmina Dazert - Postma, Wilhelmina Hendrika Maria, born August 31, 1886, Amsterdam. Usual name **Marie**.

On the first photo of Marie she is sitting with her husband Jan in front of the car. Jantje, was around 6 years old, so the photo will have been taken during the First World War, around 1917. The registration of the car is dated 1911.

As a mother of a growing family, Marie lost her 6½ week old baby, the twin brother of baby Corry, in October 1916. This was a time of great sadness in her life as a young woman.

After that she had two more daughters. Her youngest daughter Ernie is in a beautiful photo with her.

Again a period of mourning entered her life; her husband Jan died of an aneurysm on January 4, 1926.

My admiration for this woman grew. She became director of the Cardo company and raised her five children. Marie moved several times in Breda, then to Teteringen, to Maarn and June 24, 1940 to Beek-Ubbergen. Marie Dazert, son Jan and daughters Maria and Ernie are registered on the card of the Natte Beek 2 in Beek. During the period in which she wrote her war diary, September 17, 1944 to August 1945, only daughters Corry and Ernie lived in the Blokhut with their mother.



This photo was taken in the blossom orchard near the Blokhut. Perhaps it was taken after the liberation of Beek?

from left to right Mary, Corry, Bertha, Ernie (sitting) and Marie.

Marie Dazert moved from Beek-Ubbergen to Bussum on March 19, 1948. Son Jan continued to live in the Blokhut until 1956, next to neighbor Eva de Ranitz, who died on December 16, 1961.

During the war, in the Blokhut and in Bussum Marie tried to learn the English language. She proudly showed granddaughter Wilhelmina how much English she already was speaking, during a visit from granddaughter to grandmother. In Bussum, Marie sells some of the houses she owns.

English would serve Marie well. Daughter Corry, who married the Canadian soldier Arthur Garland after the war, who "had a crush on Corry and came every day", was

abandoned by her husband after several years of marriage. The couple then had two children, Naomi and Rembrandt.

Not long after, Marie Dazert emigrated to Vancouver, Canada, to support daughter Corry. Marie's youngest daughter Ernie was already there to take care of them.

Marie made the crossing by boat on April 17, 1951 and took her prefab house to be built to Vancouver. The piano was also on board, because "Marie could play the piano beautifully", grandson Rembrandt said. The construction of the house did not go quite according to plan, it took longer and cost more than expected, but when it was finished, the family was very happy with the result.

Marie Dazert moved into the house with daughter Ernie, daughter Corry and her two children.



Marie writing letters in Vancouver.



From left to right: Corry, Marie, Ernie, Rembrandt, Naomi.

This is also stated in the newspaper clipping that Mr. Albert van der Heide sent me. He also wrote about the Canadian emigration officials: they regularly joked about the household effects of the Dutch emigrants, about what they took with them:

“everything but the kitchen sink!

In the 1950s, Marie Dazert made one last visit by boat, to the family in the Netherlands. It is not known whether her son Jan visited her in Vancouver. Son-in-law Sal Israëls did visit the family.

During the rest of her life Marie stayed with her children and grandchildren in Vancouver. Grandson Rembrandt does note that grandmother often had an absent look in her eyes; did she feel happy in Canada or did she still often miss her motherland?

Out of love for her daughter, who was struggling after the divorce, Marie left for Canada ...

Marie Dazert died of a stroke on November 13, 1963 at the age of 77 in Vancouver. Grandson Rembrandt was with her, near her deathbed.

Jan Dazert, Johannes Hermanus Maria, born September 24, 1911, Breda.

Jan was the firstborn in the family. I could not find a picture of Jan as an adult. On the photo, where he is sitting in front of the car in his sailor suit, Jan seems to be six years old, so around 1917.

In that year the Cardo company was founded. The car was owned from 2011, the year of Jan's birth. The family then lived at 59 Ginnekenstraat in Breda and had a men's fashion store. Another photo of Jan shows him as a toddler with beautiful curly hair, sitting on his grandfather Dazert lap.



Jan and his grandfather Dazert

After the death of his father in 1926, Jan may have worked in his parents' Cardo company; I have no confirmation of this. His mother and the children moved to Maarn after the company had ended on June 29, 1936. Did Jan also come along or did he go to Beek-Ubbergen? Jan's name reappears in the housing map of Natte Beek 2 in Beek. His mother is registered there from 24-06-1940. (No. 1 on the list). She then came from Maarn. I have not been able to find out why she moved to Beek-Ubbergen at the beginning of the war. If you look closely at this map, it shows Wed. de Ranitz - van Mourik as No. 2. She came to live in the Blokhut at Natte Beek 2 on 06-01-1942. Eva de Ranitz was already living in Beek, a few houses away, in villa

“Westeraue”. Jan is number 3 on the map, but his name does not indicate since when he lived there or where he came from. Jan is not at the Blokhut from 17 September 1944 until the end of the war; I suspect that he is somewhere near Maarn, where more family members live. He was 33 years old at the time, he may have been in hiding because he belonged to the age group of men who were recruited for work in Germany.

On 11 May 1944, Marie Dazert writes in her diary that in the letter she received from daughter Berthe, is mentioned “that Jan had been captured twice by the Germans, but that he had escaped by jumping out of the train.” Anyway, Jan was back home in the Blokhut in the May days of 1945. “And Jan is also home again...” his mother writes in her diary around 11 May.

Jan stayed in the Blokhut until March 13, 1956, and then moved to Verbindingsweg 31 in Beek. Some villagers and Marie Dazert's grandchildren told me the following. Jan has been single for a long time. He was a radio technician, and also he was an operator at a cinema in Nijmegen. A villager says that Jan was a bon vivant. He is also said to have taken part in hunting parties in the Ooy. At a later age, Jan married Helena Cornelia Jansen (Lenie). She died on January 15, 1968. Jan later remarried. Wilhelmina Moses thought his second wife was a retired nun, who took care of Jan during his illness. I have not been able to find out her name and the date of death of both.



Jan Dazert

Mary Dazert, Maria Henrica Wilhelmina Johanna, born April, 02, 1914, Breda Maria was born as the second child in the family. Like her mother and her younger sister Bertha, she was a talented painter. Before the Second World War she painted plates and other objects at a pottery factory. From 06-24-1949 to 06/30/1950 she is registered in the log cabin at the Natte Beek in Beek. During the period in which her mother wrote her diary, Mary did not stay in the Blokhut, but in the Gooi. There she met her future husband Salomon (Sal) Israëls. He was born on 06-06-1902 in Kampen. During the war, Sal was largely hiding in a haystack because he was Jewish, so his wife Mary told her cousin Rembrandt, when he visited her in the Netherlands in 2003 with his aunt Ernie. Sal had previously been married to Martha de Beer. Sal would later divorce her. Martha had previously been divorced from Maurits Israëls, Sal's brother. They had a daughter, Geertruida. There is a beautiful photo of Sal and Mary, probably a wedding photo. If you ask me, it radiates happiness. **The photo below is estimated to have been taken shortly after the war.**



Mary and Sal Israëls left for Rotterdam on October 26, 1950, and they have always lived there. They had no children. Salomon died on April 5, 1982 in Rotterdam. Mary made many paintings. Her cousin Rembrandt wrote to me that unfortunately most of her work was destroyed in a fire in her studio. His sister Naomi has a few more paintings and... at Rembrandt's house the painting of the 'Blokhut' adorns the wall. The painting of the Blokhut is signed, Mary Dazert, 17 Sept 1945, Beek near Nijmegen. When I saw the picture of the painting, I immediately got the idea that it should be on the cover of the book. Mary died on November 18, 2012 at the age of 98 in Rotterdam.

Corry Dazert, Cornelia Johanna Maria, born May 09, 1916, Breda
Corry was twin sister of: Nicolaas Johannes Maria, born 09-05-1916, Breda.

Nicolaas died 10-20-1916, Breda.

He had a stomach problem that could not be treated at the time .

Corry also grew up in Breda. She was 9 years old when her father died. Corry was trained as a nurse. She lived in the Blokhut during the war and she has worked in the hospital Waalheувel. Corry experienced many of what her mother and youngest sister Ernie have gone through during the occupation. At the end of the Second World War she met the Canadian soldier Arthur Garland. He made frequent visits to the Blokhut, and it soon became apparent that he had a crush on Corry. In her diary, Marie Dazert describes him as “a new Canadian friend, a nice boy.”

The photo was taken in Volendam shortly after the war, before the couple got married and left for Vancouver (Canada). They got two children, daughter Naomi (1948) and son Rembrandt (1949). Rembrandt wrote me that after a couple of years of marriage, his mother was abandoned by her husband Arthur. Corry and Arthur divorced and Corry was left with two small children in a strange town in a strange land. It was very sad that Arthur Garland turned out to have several families, with children.



Corry and Arthur Garland, just after the war.



Corry and daughter Naomi.

Corry's sister Ernie soon came to Vancouver and lived by Corry and the children. She took care of them while Corry went to work. For most of her career Corry worked as a medical photographer for the Workers Compensation Board. After the prefab house was built by a Dutch company in Vancouver, Corry, her two children, Ernie and grandmother Marie Dazert lived together in this house for many years. It wasn't until 1973 that Ernie bought her own house and Corry moved into an apartment. Corry died in Vancouver on May 16, 2003 at the age of 87.

Rembrandt Garland, Corry's son and grandson of Marie Dazert wrote:

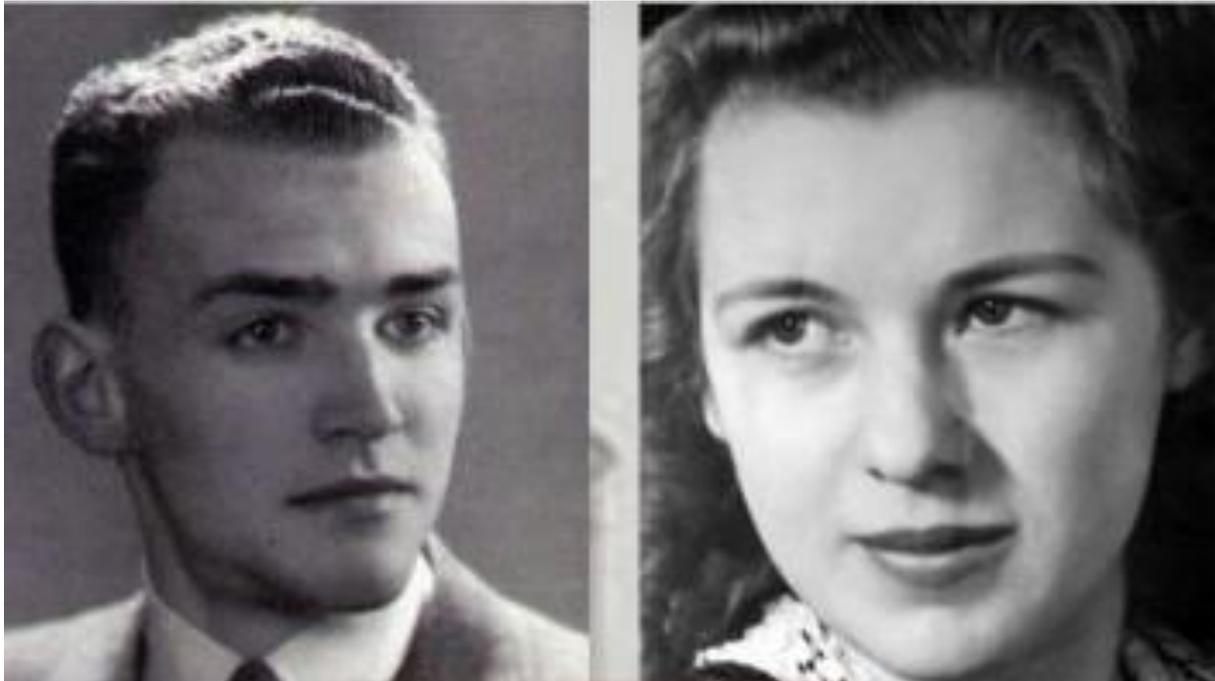
This is my mom, walking down East Hastings in 1949... that's my sister Naomi in the carriage...my mom was carrying me...my dad had just left my mom, and she was alone in a strange country...but she carved out a life for herself...and for me and my sis...and I am constantly thankful for her...I never knew my dad, but after his death I found out I had four half brothers and sisters...turns out my dad was married 4 times- 2 kids by each of the first 3 marriages...Not sure, but I'm guessing my dad had a problem with commitment...

The sadness on her face, just consider going through a war...(in Holland) my mom and some of her young friends went skating on a pond...the Germans lobbed some mortars onto the pond...my mom said she crawled across the bodies of her dead/dying friends to get to safety...then coming to Canada for a new start...only to be left by my dad...all alone...but yet, she found the faith to continue...she is my inspiration...

Bep Dazert, Bertha Johanna Maria, born September 09, 1919, Breda.

Bep is the fourth child in the family. She grew up in Breda and lost her father when she was seven years old. With her mother and other family members she moved to Maarn in mid-1936, where they (according to her daughter Wilhelmina) went to live in a cute little house called "Het Rusthoekje."

Before the war, Bertha, like her older sister Mary, worked as a pottery painter. At "Het Rusthoekje" Bertha met the man she was going to marry, Louis Schotemeijer, born in Rotterdam. Louis was an American, stationed with / in the army near Maarn.



Louis Schotemeijer and Bertha Dazert.

Bertha and Louis were married on November 3, 1942 in the municipality of Ubbergen. During the period in which Marie Dazert wrote her diary, she mentions the name of Bertha, her husband and daughter. They hear so little from each other and have no contact. Bertha's daughter Ineke (Wilhelmina) was born in the summer of 1943, and just after the war, in the summer of 1945, her brother Louis was born. In 1947 another boy, Peter, was born in the family. After the liberation, Bertha, Louis and children visited Marie Dazert several times in "de Blokhut"; granddaughter Wilhelmina has memories of these moments. She also said that Bertha was a good mother who was always there for her children. As the children grew up, she started working in her husband's real estate business.



From left to right: Peter, Louk, Bertha, Louis, Ineke (Wilhelmina) Schotemeijer.

The family moved to Lage Vuursche, where Bertha's sister Jos also lived. In 1966, Bertha's daughter Wilhelmina (Ineke) emigrated to the United States because she had met an American, whom she married. They lived in numerous places in the world. Bertha's son Louis (Louk) also emigrated to the United States a few years after his sister. He now lives in Washington State. Louk is the father of Louis "Dutch" Schotemeyer, with whom I made the very first family contact via LinkedIn. Around 1980 the couple Bertha and Louis also decided to make the move; they emigrated to Utah (USA). Bertha was about 60 years old at that time. Bertha's youngest son Peter then continued to live with his sons in Maarsbergen. Bertha's daughter Wilhelmina eventually settled with her husband Zolin Moses in Nevada, close to Las Vegas and near her parents Bertha and Louis in Utah. Now she was able to help them as they grew older. Bertha died in 2015 at the age of 96.

Ernie Dazert, Hermina Johanna Maria, born November 17, 1922, Teteringen.

Ernie was the youngest in the family. She was only three years old when she lost her father.

She also moved with her family to Maarn at the end of 1936.



Marie and her youngest daughter Ernie.

On June 24, 1940, at the start of the war, Ernie also came to live in the log cabin on the Natte Beek in Beek. She trained as a dental assistant. In the later war years she worked in the Emergency Hospital Waalheuvel in Ubbergen. Marie Dazert regularly writes about Ernie in her diary.

Ernie experiences a lot of the bombings and shelling in the front area in the log cabin and during her work in the hospital; especially the seriously injured children make a deep impression. She herself escapes from a shrapnel when she had just walked out of her armchair because someone came to the door.

But she also experienced the fun things, together with sister Corry, such as the dance evenings with the Canadian soldiers.

Ernie also knew love in those years, which is described further in this story.

According to the housing card, Ernie left the cabin on 08/18/1949, one year after her mother. She then also moved to Bussum.

A year later she would unexpectedly emigrate to Canada.

Ernie came to Canada to help her sister Corry after her husband abandoned her. This was around 1950. The first years she took care of the children Naomi and Rembrandt, while their mother Corry worked.

Later Ernie started working as a dental assistant. Grandma Marie Dazert could take care of the children while Corry was working.



Ernie, shortly after moving to Vancouver.

Ernie bought her first home when she was 51 years old.

Regular contact remained with Corry's family until his death in 2003.

Ernie was 81 years old at the time. Corry's son Rembrandt then began to visit her regularly in Vancouver, from Victoria. Three years later, Ernie developed medical problems and began to suffer from Alzheimer's. Rembrandt then became her caregiver and helped her with appointments, arranging home care, among other things.

During one of his visits to her, Ernie took out a box of letters and art drawings. They belonged to a man who was underground in the Netherlands during the war.

He somehow sent her love letters and drawings. After the war they wanted to get married. Ernie came from a strict Catholic family. The priest said that couldn't, because he was not a Catholic. He began taking catechism classes, but was ultimately unable to adopt a Catholic faith. That meant the end of the relationship for Ernie.

And now... years later, at the end of her life, those letters. Each time Rembrandt visited his aunt, she took out some letters and drawings.

And, how sad, when Rembrandt asked her what she would do now, if she saw him again, she immediately replied: "I would marry him as soon as possible!"

Sometime in the 1970s, Ernie had returned to the Netherlands one more time to see if she could still find this man. Unfortunately, she did not find him.

When Ernie was 90 years old, she could no longer live independently. She then lived with her cousin Rembrandt for a year. Because she needed more care, she got a nice place in a new center for Alzheimer's patients near Rembrandt.

Ernie Dazert died on April 2, 2016 at the age of 93 in Victoria. Her cousin Rembrandt left her

body to Vancouver, where she was interred in the grave of her mother Marie and her sister Corry.



Ernie in her older days.

The photos in this diary are used with permission of:

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Josine Franken, Beek

The English translation of the diary was made by Josine Franken, in cooperation with Marianne Cruiming. The chapter with further information on Marie Dazert and her five children was added.

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